

new life news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST
FEBRUARY 2019

What's All the Buzz About D-Groups?

Each of us may have a different idea about what a D-Group is about and why it even matters. When I first heard the term, I know I was a bit confused...I called it Bible Study group to help others understand. But I realized that I was not explaining it correctly. The "D" stands for Discipleship, and there are many references to discipleship in the Bible, including: *"And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."* Luke 9:23 KJV.

I first joined my D-group because my friend, Kim Dixon, invited me to check it out. At first, I was a little intimidated because, for one thing, my group is led by Steve and Stephanie Kistler, and I was unsure about how comfortable I would be in that setting with our church leadership. But I've learned to listen to the advice from trusted friends over the years – so I started attending on Monday nights.

You walk in expecting a few families, mostly married couples, all with their Bibles open. What you find, however, is simply a gathering of Christ followers talking about their daily struggles, sharing recipes, family vacation stories, and just the challenges of Christian life and raising kids today. Fellowship on a very real, practical level.

In some ways, D-group may sound a lot like just another version of church service. It's true that we pray together, explore and discuss scriptures, and we break bread together. What church gathering exists without food, anyway?? But it's much more than that.

To explain what the D-Group means to me involves a few personal stories. These are some of the specific ways in which our group, in my experience, is distinctively different from Sunday service, and ways that this gathering has positively impacted my life and my walk with Christ.

Connectedness Love. A few months ago, Ed Clawson, who was in our D-group, was suffering with heart problems and went to the hospital for an ablation.

- Jan 31
Scrapbook/Crafts 6pm
- Feb 1
Scrapbook/Crafts 1pm
- Feb 2
Scrapbook/Crafts 10:00am
- Feb 6 & 20
Comfort & Joy Sewing
9:00am
Feb 10,17,24
Sonshine Singers Prac 4:00pm
- Feb 12
Care package packing
6:00pm
- Feb 20
Comfort & Joy Sewing
5:30pm

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He posted updates in our group messaging system (we use the GroupMe app on our mobile devices and it's easy and convenient!). I found myself caring more and praying more for his situation than I otherwise would have, had it not been for our D-group connection. I felt a stronger connection to the Clawsons and deeper sense of concern.

Another example is from my own recent medical situation – I had hernia repair surgery. Now, I understand that the church community cares for one another as Christ followers and members of New Life...regardless. But because of D-group, I was more inclined to contact my church family and share this news of my surgery, to seek help from those with whom I met weekly and enjoyed dinners, laughed at the kids' antics, and explored what Paul meant in his letters to the Corinthians. Those Monday night gatherings opened a doorway to more honesty, openness, and willingness to say 'yes' to a meal delivery (to my home, after surgery...such a gift). Some members of my D-group checked in via the GroupMe app to ask how I was recovering, if my family needed anything. The outpouring of love took me a bit by surprise. And it felt real, sincere.

When one family is suffering due to illness, a near-miss auto accident, surgery, problems with teenagers, whatever the case may be – we feel it more deeply, pray more earnestly, and jump into action to help. We pass around books like *Love Does* by Bob Goff and talk about their meaning for us, as Christians, and how to put some of the wisdom into practice in our lives.

From my perspective, members of our D-group don't hesitate to check in, remind one another to seek God's guidance in daily decisions, even holding each other accountable to do so. Because we have that special connection. I have shared personal struggles with this group without fear of judgment. And love pours out.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John 4:7 KJV

If you allow it to happen – there's a special, sometimes unexpected and strong connection that develops among members of a D-group. You check in on one another when a blizzard is coming, you share struggles of child or grand-child rearing in this often-crazy world! Sure, you bond over pot-luck dinners, even when dessert becomes the main course. You demonstrate true, uninhibited, let's-get-through-this-together love for one another.

To sum it up – when I have to miss a weekly meeting of my D-group due to work or a family commitment, there's a small hole that doesn't get filled until I gather with my D-group people again the next week. God calls me to reach out to them – send a message to see how everyone's doing, find out how that family is doing that the Browns chopped wood for last week. I miss my group and nothing else can fill the hole.

Alice Bateson

Our group's goals are to encourage each other, to grow in learning from God's Word and to serve others who might have a need.

Some of the resources we've used are a creation study with Ken Hamm, a study in prayer with Ann Graham Lotz and recently "Unshakable Hope with Max Lucado.

In serving others we've cleaned the church carpets and table and chairs, supplied transportation for people needing it, helped with the ARK (Afterschool Resources for Kids), cut wood, provided help at the Children's Home and Round Lake.

We occasionally attend a Christian movie together, eat together or attend a Christian musical program.

We meet at 6:00p on Wednesday at the Hamilton's.

Marlin & Reta Hamilton

February Birthdays

1 – Brody Dawson

6 – Caleb Kindt

7 – Tom Roseberry

9 – Grace Rogers

11 – Matt Bower, Brad Brown, Megan Frontz

13 – Jack Brokaw

14 – Lisa Awwiller, Steve Kistler,

15 – Myla Dawson

17 – Evelyn Roseberry

19 – Deb Solis

20 – Sadie Slone

22 – Parker Hawkins

25 – Todd Awwiller, Sarah Johnson

27 – Jonah Sharp

28 – Garnet Cover

Jon and I are leading a group that meets at our home on Sunday evenings, from 6 to 7:30pm. We follow the CIA and Youth Group schedule, to allow parents a needed break from their children, and for the children to learn and have fun with their peers.

We are a new group, so we are spending our time getting to know one another and in sharing specific prayer needs. As everyone works, and is also active serving at New Life and in the community, at present we are not intending to engage in a specific study, but are open to doing so in the future.

If you've considered joining a group, but haven't yet, I offer this perspective: one of the joys of participating in discipleship groups is getting to know people on a deeper level through shared stories of life experience.

How wonderful to have an opportunity to make new friends, which we all know becomes increasingly difficult the longer we live. Having not only a church family, but people within it to call friends, is a true blessing!

Amy Beveridge

When Natalie Greer was here, she led a group of young adult women just out of high school. When she got married and moved to South Dakota the group disbanded. God put it on my heart to begin that group again. I contacted some of the girls that were in Natalie's group and some newly graduated girls and asked if they were interested in beginning a group. They were all very excited, so in November we began our group. We are currently studying the book "Be Joyful" by Warren Weirsbe. It is the study of the book of Philippians. Our service projects have consisted of raking leaves, picking up sticks and pinecones for a couple in our church, sending get well cards and currently painting the Jr. Church room. The girls in the group have such serving hearts and their willingness to serve those in our church and community has been amazing. We meet on Sunday nights at 6:00pm at my house. We eat a meal together and just share our lives with one another. God has blessed me so much with this group.

Sherri Benick

